

HCS HB 654 -- OZARK EXPLORATION COMMISSION

SPONSOR: Rowland (155)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Special Committee on Tourism by a vote of 11 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 11 to 0.

This bill creates the "Schoolcraft Ozark Exploration Bicentennial Commission" and the "Schoolcraft Ozark Exploration Bicentennial Fund" to hold any state or federal appropriations, gifts, or other money for use by the commission. The commission includes two representatives appointed by the Speaker. The duties of the commission include organizing and coordinating efforts relating to the bicentennial celebration of the exploration of the Ozarks by Henry Rowe Schoolcraft in 1819 as well as promoting public awareness of the significance of his exploration. The commission will be dissolved on June 30, 2019.

This bill is the same as SB 161 (2017).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that Henry Rowe Schoolcraft introduced the world to the Missouri Ozarks through writings of his exploration of the Ozarks and the mineral deposits in the area. In recent years, cultural heritage tourism has grown in Missouri. This commission would promote the bicentennial of Schoolcraft's exploration, which would increase tourism in the Ozarks.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Rowland and Dr. Steve Belko, Missouri Humanities Council.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.